Errata

Enumerating Backgammon Positions: The Perfect Hash

By Arthur Benjamin and Andrew M. Ross

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The equation on the top of page 8 shows the form of the terms S_i to be used in a sum. The bottom part of the multichoose expression contains the expression:

$$15 - (K_1 + ... + K_i + 1)$$

In this expression, K_1 should be K_0 , giving:

$$15 - (K_0 + ... + K_i + 1)$$

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The second paragraph under the heading PROPERTIES OF THE ENUMERATION reads:

"There is a quick algorithm to convert an integer back into a position, by successively subtracting various values to find how many checkers are on point 6, then point 5, and so forth. This means that we can go from positions to integers and back again without using a large lookup table."

It is not clear whether this statement is accurate or not. There is, however, a brute force method that works in the reverse order. First it determines what value to subtract in order to learn how many checkers are off the board (on the 0pt). Once that is known, the next round determines how many checkers are on the 1pt, and so on.

If there is another algorithm that corresponds to the description given by Benjamin and Ross, please send any information you have about it to Tom Keith at Backgammon Galore!.